STARS

STep Ahead Recognition System

Vermont's
STep Ahead Recognition System
for
Child Care, Early Education and Afterschool Programs

Application and Instructions
for programs
accredited by NAA, NAFCC or NECPA
and
qualifying NAEYC Accredited and Head Start programs
with Blue or Gold Certificates
2007

STARS

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General instructions

Congratulations for choosing to participate in Vermont's STARS. STARS recognizes accomplishments and activities of child care and education programs that go above and beyond the state regulations for these programs.

Programs accredited through NAEYC, NAFCC, NAA or NECPA automatically qualify for specific point levels in other arenas. Head Start/Early Head Start sites whose programs received a Blue or Gold Certificate are also eligible for these automatic points.

Programs that (1) are accredited under the 2006 NAEYC standards or are Head Start programs with Blue or Gold Certificates, and (2) are have Specialized Child Care Services status and (3) have been in business for 5 years or more without regulatory violations resulting in a Parent Notification Letter are eligible for 5 stars and use a simplified application. Contact the STARS administration (Learning Partners) for this application.

PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY. The information in these instructions will assist you in preparing the application materials. Additional important information is in the STARS Program Guide, a companion to this document.

Programs that operate multiple sites or multiple programs submit separate application materials for each site or program separately recognized by the Licensing Division (each separate license number). Head Start/Early Head Start child care programs submit applications for sites where Head Start holds the license. Head Start partners and other collaborating programs must submit their own materials and are not eligible for the streamlined application process unless they are accredited themselves.

This application for STARS consists of a cover page, background information, and an application form that is appropriate for programs that meet the qualifications stated above. It is submitted with verifying documentation according to the number of points the program is requesting in each arena.

The application must be signed on the cover page and at the bottom of page 2 of the background information form. Applications without signatures will not be processed. A person who is responsible for the daily operation of the program or the administration of the program should sign this application.

A complete application must include at least the following to receive the automatic points.

All pages of the application

A copy of the accreditation certificate or Head Start Blue or Gold Certificate

A copy of an annual program improvement plan or annual report to the accrediting body (within the 12 months prior to the date of STARS application)

A copy of the accreditation commission's report, findings from the validation visit or PRISM review report and cover letter

For registered programs, a copy of the parent handbook, contract or policy statement as outlined in the Administration for Registered Programs arena

If needed for licensed programs (that is, the accrediting body has indicated that staff supervision or planning time needs improvement), additional materials for staff supervision and planning time in the Administration for Licensed Programs arena

Additional materials are needed to receive more than the automatic points.

Specific instruction for each section of the application:

Cover Page

A copy of this cover page will be given to the applicant with the certificate. On this page, indicate the number of points being sought for each arena and overall star level. This page should be signed by the applicant.

Background Information Form

Contact information

"Contact name" refers to the person who should be contacted if there are any questions about the application. "Other contact name" is for those situations where there is an alternative person who can respond to questions about the application.

"Town where facility is located" refers to the exact physical location of the facility. Indicate the name of the city, town, village or other municipality where the child care program is located. This may or may not be the same as the mailing address and does not refer to the towns the facility serves.

Program information

Complete the information in this section in terms of what best describes the program.

For question 3, program affiliation, check one of the boxes only if the child care program operates or is administered under the guidelines of these programs. If the child care program operates independently but collaborates with these programs, leave the item blank.

For questions 5 through 8, if the program has a variable operating schedule, indicate what is most typical, most accurate or usually true about the program.

Enrollment information

For question 9, indicate the total number of children who are enrolled or cared for on a regular basis. Do not include children who are not counted by regulations, such as the children (older than two years) of family child care registrants or visitors. Do not include children who attend less often than twice a month (such as school aged children who attend on vacations only).

For question 10, indicate the number that best describes the number of children the program serves on any given day or 24 hour period. Include both full and part day attendees and if there are two or more shifts provided, count all children across all shifts. Do not include children who are not included in question 9 (above).

Arena I. Compliance History

Programs must have a visit from a CDD licensing specialist within two years of the date of the STARS application. Programs that have not been visited by Licensing during the last two years should call the STARS program administration (Learning Partners) at 802-479-5261. Licensing will be notified that the program desires a visit and the program will be visited within the licensing specialist's visiting routine. The licensing specialist will perform a standard drop-in visit as it does for programs not participating in STARS.

If there are questions about the regulatory history of the program or the date of the last licensing specialist's visit, call Child Care Licensing at 1-800-649-2642.

There are no verifications to submit for this arena. Check the appropriate box and sign the form at the bottom. This information will be verified with the Child Development Division.

Arena II. Qualifications and Training

Qualifying programs receive 2 points and no verifying documentation is submitted for this point level.

Programs can apply for 3 points and should refer to the arena descriptions and the application for information on the indicators to use to meet the standards for qualifications and training.

The qualifications and training standards apply to 50% (one half) of the staff members of the program. Start by completing the staff information section on page 2, listing those staff members who have been on staff for at least 6 months and either a) are left alone with children or b) could be left alone with children (that is, they are qualified according to regulations and the program operates on the assumption that they could provide coverage in case of shortages or emergencies). Administrators and directors are listed if they satisfy these criteria. Include both full and part time regular staff members, regardless of the number of hours worked per week. The family child care registrant should be listed, as should any family members or helpers (paid or unpaid) who regularly care for the children and satisfy the criteria.

Of this list of people, one half of them need to meet the standards for the three point level. Divide the number of people listed by 2. If this results in a fraction, round up (for example, 50% of one person on staff would be one person; 50% of three people would be two; 50% of seven people would be four). Check the box in the left hand column for the people being counted to meet the standard.

For the staff members who are being counted in the 50% (that is, the left hand column is checked), the application must include 1) professional development plan, 2) list of professional development activities completed in the past year (further verification may be requested), 3) verification of educational level attained and 4) work history (a resume may be submitted) for each.

For licensed programs, these staff members are the same people used if meeting the wage standard for 3 points in Administration for Licensed Programs.

Arena III. Families and Community

Qualifying programs receive one point, with no documentation required.

Qualifying programs can receive two points in this arena if they:

(1) are Specialized Child Care Services Provider with up-to-date training and letter of agreement with the Child Development Division (this is verified with the CDD by the STARS administrators)

and

(2) serve on teams whose mission is to provide services either to individual families enrolled in the program or to families in the community. This standard recognizes the ways in which child care, early education and afterschool professionals promote children, families or the profession.

The family and community service time must add up to at least 24 hours in the 12 month period covered in the application. Any person who is considered a staff member of the program (that is, they are included under the Qualifications and Training and the Administration arenas) can participate, but each meeting or activity counts only once, regardless of the number of staff members involved.

There are a variety of ways to meet this standard through team participation and other service activities. These are detailed below (sections A and B) and include times where specific people meet for family or community service as well as ways that the program is involved in broader service activities. Programs can use a combination of activities under sections A and B for a total of 24 hours. Each B category can only be used once.

A. These are the kinds of meetings that can be counted:

Meetings are defined as times when a member of the program is face to face with at least two other outside agencies or programs for a prearranged time with no responsibility for the care of children. These meetings count hour for hour – that is, any amount of time spent in such meetings is countable (travel is not). The meetings are entered on the application by dates and amount of time. Specific dates of meetings and parties involved must be listed.

1. Family service meetings. Meetings on behalf of a family or families enrolled in the program. These family service meetings involve members of service agencies or other child care and education programs. For these meetings, it is preferred that a family member is present as one of the three (total) parties. If family members have been invited but are unable to attend, family service meetings that involve only 2 parties will count. (It is assumed that parents are told of the content of the meeting.) In this case, indicate "parents unable to attend" on the application. These meetings generally involve Essential Early Education, the Family Infant Toddler Program, Early Childhood Mental Health, Head Start/Early Head Start, Kindergarten teachers, Child Protective Services or other child care or education programs.

2. Community service meetings. Meetings with other members of the community for the purpose of promoting children, families or out of home care (participation as a representative from the child care and education profession).

The community service meetings could be
board meetings, as a board member, for community organizations that support children and families (for example, Community Action, Parent Child Center, Prevent Child Abuse)

or

community or committee meetings, as a member, for local initiatives such as Success by Six, Vermont's Alliance for Children, Early Childhood Councils, or other type of community based advisory council.

3. Service improvement meetings. Meetings with child care and education professionals and others to:

Discuss and enhance coordination of services to children and families through collaboration among local child care and education programs, schools, mental health agencies, child protective services, services for children with special needs and so on. (For example, a Starting Points network or support group invites other professionals to meet with providers and discuss service delivery or a group of child care and education programs meet with school staff and kindergarten teachers to discuss ways to support children in transitioning to public school. Meetings used for this purpose cannot be counted as training hours under the Qualifications and Training arena.)

Advise the CDD about their initiatives, other ad hoc or standing committee participation with multidisciplinary membership

Participate in CDD initiatives, such as interdisciplinary CDD sponsored meetings such as grant review committees and public forums to review regulations

B. These are the other service activities that can be counted:

Service activities recognize the ways in which the provider or program collaborates with other agencies and service providers or supports families or the profession where actual face to face, multi-agency meetings do not occur. **These activities receive 8 hours of credit to be used towards the yearly 24 hour total**. There are 5 ways to receive the lump sum hours. Programs can participate in any or all of the five but will receive no more than 8 hours in any one category.

1. Agencies outside the program deliver services within the child care or education program.
Criteria: The child care or education program has specialists come into the program to provide services to children and families during the program day for at least 9 of the 12 months covered by the application.

Validating information required: Record the agency(s) delivering services and which months the visits occurred. Visits do not have to be recorded separately, nor is the amount of time for each visit recorded.

The service providers include (but are not limited to) EEE/EEI, FITP, early childhood mental health, speech/language services, occupational or physical therapy, parent mentoring programs, Head Start/Early Head Start visitors, or Stern Center literacy project visitors. If the applying program provides these services as part of their program (that is, the services are provided by someone paid by the program), they do not count as an outside agency or service provider.

2. Participation in community or family/child oriented events
Criteria: The program participates, under its program name, in community events such as Family Fun Day, Founder's Day, Dabble Day. Participation could include organizing or hosting the event or having a booth, parade entry or other activity presented under the program's name.

Validating information required: Describe the community event (including date, location and sponsors) and the role the program played.

3. Involving enrolled school aged children in community service

Criteria: The program arranges for children who are of school age and enrolled in the program to engage in community service activities such as visiting or working with senior citizens or younger children (e.g., reading) or volunteering for community projects (e.g., Green Up Day, working at the Humane Society).

Validating information required: Describe the community event (including participants and sponsors) and the role the program played.

4. Hosting or organizing events in support or recognition of child care, early education and afterschool professionals

Criteria: Host or organize provider recognition event, conference for child care and education professionals or legislator visits to programs.

Validating information required: Describe the recognition or professional event (including date, location and sponsors) and the role the program played.

5. Mentoring or being mentored in one-on-one professional relationships

Criteria: Any staff member of the program participated in a mentoring relationship – that is, was a mentor or received mentoring – under the auspices of an established oversight or supervisory system external to the program.

Validating information required: Describe the mentoring relationship (include estimated frequency of visits), identify the mentor and the oversight or supervisory body or sponsor.

For 3 points, the standards recognize the ways in which child care, early education and afterschool professionals provide leadership in various ways.

Professional leadership is defined in terms of activities that (1) support the profession, (2) support the systems that support it and (3) provide inspiration and positive role models for other members of the profession throughout the state and beyond.

In addition to a written statement about how the program plays a leadership role and exemplifies the definition above, there are certain activities that are indicative of and required for professional leadership.

STARS recognizes program accomplishments, where leadership is generally defined in terms of individuals. Therefore, the leadership activities can be done by any person who is considered a staff member of the program (that is, they are included under the Qualifications and Training and the Administration arenas). Different people can play different roles, so more than one person can contribute to the leadership role of the program as a whole. All staff members who play a leadership role should contribute to the program's written statement.

The indicators that this standard has been achieved do not include specific numbers of hours of service (as in the 2 point standard). The indicators at this level include ongoing activities and service – participation that endures over time. This point level recognizes the leadership role, where the 2 point standard recognizes services provided. Some activities can be counted in both levels – that is, the program gets credit for the service hours in 2 points and the leadership role in 3 points. These are indicated where applicable.

The activities that are indicative of and required for leadership are listed below. To meet the standard the program must participate in four or the six possible types of activities or roles listed below (from A1 to C2).

A. Activities or roles that support the profession. These activities build and share knowledge with other members of the profession, to build the profession with one's colleagues (the following serve as examples to use to determine the type of activity that fits)

1. Specific events or activities – done at least once in last year
Attend annual or other business meeting of a statewide or national professional organization such as NAEYC/VAEYC, VCCPA or VSACN/VOOST; or annual meeting of the Early Childhood Workgroup or other statewide, multidisciplinary group (hours at meetings count in 2 points, section A3).

Present at a conference or training session that is sponsored by a local, state or national professional group and open to the professional public (such as a community child care support agency, VAEYC/VSCAN, VCCPA, Early Childhood Council or Starting Points Network).

Participate in committees that review CDD mini-grants (hours at meetings count in 2 points, section A3).

Serve as a sponsoring site for the Registered Child Care Apprenticeship Program.

2. Ongoing role – done for at least 3 of last 5 years
Starting Points Network leader or coordinator, support group leader (holding at least 6 network meetings per year) (Depending on the topic, network meetings might count in the 2 point level, section A3, or in the qualifications and training arena, but any given meeting cannot count in both arenas).

Hold board member or officer status for statewide or national professional organization dedicated to the care and education of children 12 and under, such as NAEYC, VAEYC, VCCPA, NEA and VSACN, or serve on active committees of these organizations.

Hold board member or officer status in local organizations (not one the person works for) that support children and families or serve on active committees in local initiatives such as Success by Six, Vermont's Alliance for Children, Early Childhood Councils, or other type of community based advisory council (meetings attended in last 12 months count in 2 points, section A2).

Instructor, teacher or faculty for college level coursework or other extensive instruction (open to the professional public) involving at least 30 hours of related instruction with an evaluation component

B. Activities and roles that support the systems that support the profession. These activities "bring the voice of the profession to the table" and consist of actions that impact policy makers, government agencies and statewide initiatives (use the following examples to aid in determining the type of activity that fits).

1. Specific events or activities – done at least once in last year
Participate in advocacy or legislative events (legislative testimony, calling or writing to support child-oriented legislation, participate in statewide recognitions of the profession such as Early Childhood Day at the Legislature)

Attend public forum or committee for CDD regulatory review, restructuring, new initiatives or other forum for providing input into systemic changes in the state's support system for the child care and education profession (meeting hours count in the 2 point level, section A3)

2. Ongoing role – done for at least 3 of last 5 years

Participate (is a member) in statewide committees or organizations whose mission is to improve availability of high quality services to children and families or improve the child care and education profession (participation is defined by attending meetings or receiving materials and submitting feedback to the group). (If meetings are attended, meeting hours count in the 2 point level, section A3)

These groups include (but are not limited to) those associated with the Child Development Division, the Department for Children and Families or the Agency of Human Services (e.g., CDD advisory group, STARS, Northern Lights Career Development Center, Vermont's Alliance for Children); the Department of Education (e.g., Vermont Early Learning Standards, Vermont Early Childhood Education Licensure Project); the Early Childhood Workgroup; the Head Start Collaboration Project and Kids Are Priority One (KAP1).

C. Activities and roles that provide inspiration and positive role models for other members of the profession throughout the state and beyond. These activities allow leaders to share their passions and professional standards as well as their commitment to professional growth for themselves and others (use the following examples to aid in determining the type of activity that fits).

1. Specific events or activities – done at least once in last year

Attend statewide or national professional development activities that prepare participants to provide professional development to others ("train the trainer" events), such as Touchpoints, Zero to Three (training hours also count in the Qualifications and Training arena).

Attend statewide or national professional development activities that focus on developing leadership and mentoring skills (these also count in the Qualifications and Training arena).

Attend statewide or national training to prepare for or refine skills in mentoring or validation for CDA, NAEYC, NAFCC, NAA or other accrediting system (these also count in the Qualifications and Training arena).

Author or co-author a professional article that is published in professional newsletters or journals such as VAEYC's, VCCPA's or VSACN's newsletter, Young Children, or publications such as the community child care support agency's newsletter or a daily newspaper.

Oral presentations, such as keynote addresses, at professional meetings

2. Ongoing role – done for at least 3 of last 5 years

Provide mentoring locally or statewide under the auspices of an established oversight or supervisory system (e.g., CDA advising, mentoring associated with VAEYC, apprenticeship programs).

Provide approved technical assistance or validation services for NAEYC, NAFCC or NAA or other professional accreditation body.

Serves as a model or host site for an established oversight or supervisory system (e.g., college, educational program, credentialing program) where others can observe or receive training, such as interns, student teachers and other learners (not employees of the program).

Organize community activism involving the creation of new interagency or multidisciplinary initiatives.

Arena IV. Program Assessment

To achieve three points as a qualifying program, accredited programs must include a copy of the accreditation award certificate and Head Start/Early Head Start programs, a copy of the Blue or Gold Certificate.

All applicants submit the most recent annual report to the accrediting or qualifying body or, if not available, an annual program improvement plan.

Arena V. Administration

(a) Registered child care programs (Licensed programs complete (V.b))

Qualifying programs can receive 2 points with verification that the following two standards have been met.

    1) Documentation that two types of program closings (provider vacation, illness, holiday or professional time) are supported through parent fees.

    2) Identify the professional organization where membership is held.

For three points, the materials indicated on the application are submitted.

Independent verification for the operations budget can be done by an accountant, attorney, bookkeeper, advisor, instructor or other independent source who has examined the program's records and has expertise to evaluate the financial status of the program.

The operations budget could be based on the either the prior or current year. The budget must include:

1) Income received for the child care program from all sources including parent payments, subsidy, food program, grants, donations, bonuses and the like.

2) Expenses for
    food
    supplies
        cleaning, paper products, first aid
        office, art materials, program
        toys and play equipment
        furniture

    repairs and maintenance
    insurance
    business travel
    utilities
    professional dues and subscriptions
    advertising
    taxes, including self employment taxes
    employee related expenses (for example, wages, payroll taxes)
    bank charges and other administrative fees
    other

Where the expenses are shared with the household, the proportion of costs allocated to the child care program should be equivalent to the time-space calculation used for tax deduction purposes.

A photocopy of the liability insurance policy, billing statement or declarations page will serve as appropriate documentation of insurance.

(b) Licensed child care programs (including early childhood programs, licensed homes, afterschool programs and non-recurring care)

For this arena the applicable Accreditation Commission report (summarizing the finding of the validation visit and status of accreditation) is submitted.

Qualifying programs receive 2 points in this arena unless the commission's report indicates that staff supervision or staff planning time are areas in need of improvement (or the PRISM report indicates findings in Human Resources Management). If the report recommends improvement in these areas, the program improvement plan (submitted for Arena 4, Program Assessment) must address this and documentation submitted (as described) to show that these standards are met.

      1. verification or description of the staff supervision system (that is, staff has regular opportunities (weekly to monthly meetings) for feedback and problem-solving with a supervisor or mentor).

      2. verification or description that staff are provided with planning time and are compensated for this (paid planning time). The planning time must be arranged, scheduled or somehow accounted for and must occur on a weekly basis.

Qualifying programs can achieve three points by showing a median adjusted pay of at least $11.30 per hour. To calculate the median adjusted pay, complete the worksheet using the instructions on worksheet page 2. Include all staff members who have been on staff for at least 6 months <u>and</u> either a) are left alone with children or b) could be left alone with children (that is, they are qualified according to regulations and the program operates on the assumption that they could provide coverage in case of shortages or emergencies). Administrators and directors are listed if they satisfy these criteria. Include both full and part time regular staff members, regardless of the number of hours worked per week. Attach additional pages if necessary.

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Completed application materials should be sent to:

STARS
Learning Partners, Inc.
214 Elm Street
Barre, VT 05641

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S T A R S

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Application Cover Page

Contact Information   Date _____

Program name _____

Contact name _____

Position (owner, director, president, CFO, etc.) _____

Director or owner name (if not above) _____

Mailing address: Street _____

                        City _____   State _____   Zip code _____

Phone number(s)_____   email _____

Regulatory status: ☐registered home   ☐licensed center   ☐licensed home

License or registration number _____   Date first licensed/registered _____

Points requested   office use
For each arena, indicate the number of points you are requesting.   only

Arena 1   Compliance history   number of points _____   _____

Arena 2   Qualifications and Training   number of points _____   _____

Arena 3   Families and Community   number of points _____   _____

Arena 4   Program Assessment   number of points _____   _____

Arena 5   Administration   number of points _____   _____

               Total number of points requested   _____   _____

1 - 4 points   --   1 Star
5 - 7 points   --   2 Stars
8 - 10 points   --   3 Stars   Number of Stars _____   _____
11 - 13 points   –   4 Stars
14 - 15 points   –   5 Stars

Please sign below when sending in the application. A STARS representative will sign and return this
form when the application materials have been reviewed.

_____   _____
Signature of program representative   Signature of STARS representative
_____   _____
Date   Date

S T A R S

STep Ahead Recognition System

Background Information Form

Contact Information   Date _____

Program name _____

Contact name _____

Position (owner, director, president, CFO, etc.) _____

Other contact name _____ Position _____

Director or owner name (if not above) _____

Mailing address: Street _____

                    City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Town where facility is located _____ County _____

Phone number(s)_____ email _____

Program information

1. Regulatory status: ☐ registered home   ☐ licensed center   ☐ licensed home

2. License or registration number _____ Date first licensed/registered _____

3. Program Affiliation (please check if this program is managed under any of the following)
    - ☐ Public school preschool   ☐ Public school afterschool
    - ☐ EEE preschool program   ☐ Religious program
    - ☐ Head Start/Early Head Start   ☐ Waldorf
    - ☐ Montessori   ☐ Multi site

4. Business entity:
    - ☐ Independent/sole proprietor   ☐ C corporation, S corporation or LLC
    - ☐ Not for profit corporation - 501(c)(3)   ☐ Partnership or LLP
    - ☐ Other (explain) _____

5. Type of program offered during regular operation
    - ☐ full day only (over 5 hours)   ☐ full and part day
    - ☐ part day only   ☐ other (explain)

6. Days and hours of operation (indicate the days and times that the program is open, regardless of whether there are children in attendance).

    Open from _____ am/pm to _____am/pm   (indicate times and circle am or pm)

    Days regularly open: Mon ___ Tue___ Wed___ Thurs ___ Fri ___ Sat ___ Sun ___

7. The program is best described as
   - ☐ open year round   ☐ open during school year only
   - ☐ open in summer only   ☐ other (please explain)

8. Number of people employed by program: ____over 30 hrs/week ____ under 30 hrs/week

Enrollment information

9. Total number of children enrolled in program/cared for (full and part time) _____

10. Typical number of children attending on a given day (full and part day) _____

11. In the boxes below, enter the number of children enrolled, both full and part time, in the indicated categories. Some will fall in more than one category.

Use the age definitions as given below
   - ~ "Regular tuition or fees" is the usual situation where parents or other adults pay the stated fees.
   - ~ "Tuition assistance/subsidy" is where some part or all of the regular fees are paid through the DCF-CDD child care tuition assistance system, for any reason. List all children who receive <u>any</u> amount of DCF-CDD tuition assistance/subsidy.
   - ~ "Protective services" is child care assistance for children with an open case with the Family Services Division of the DCF. The children may be in foster care or with their family. "Family support" is child care for families under stress, assisting families with child care tuition as part of a larger plan to meet the family's needs.
   - ~ Children with "special needs" are those with an established or defined developmental, behavioral, medical or other special need other than protective services.

	Infants (up to 23 months)	Toddlers (24 to 35 months)	Preschool (3 to 5 years)	Kinder-garten	School age
Current number of children with families paying regular tuition/fees					
Current number of children receiving DCF-CDD tuition assistance/subsidy					
Current number of children funded through public school funding (ADM, EEE, etc.), scholarship or Head Start (and are not above)					
Current number of children in protective services or family support					
Current number of children with special needs					

* * * * * * * * * * *

I certify that the information contained in this full application is true and correct. I understand that if any information contained in this full application for the STARS program is found to be incorrect, that this application shall be voided and any certificate awarded shall be rescinded.

_____ _____ _____
Signature   Title   Date

S T A R S

STep Ahead Recognition System

I. Compliance History Arena

Contact Information   Date _____

Program name _____

Regulatory status: ▢registered home   ▢licensed center   ▢licensed home

License or registration number _____   Date first licensed/registered _____

Please check the box indicating the number of points you are requesting and sign the release statement.

▢ In compliance (no additional points):

* A licensing specialist has visited the program in the past two years. Date of visit _____

*The program is currently in compliance with all applicable regulations and any previous substantiated violations have been corrected as required to the satisfaction of the Child Development Division.

▢ For one point:

* A licensing specialist has visited the program in the past two years. Date of visit _____

* The program is in compliance as defined above and within the past year has not had any substantiated violations resulting in a Parental Notification and has not had any repeated substantiated violations of the same nature.

▢ For two points:

* A licensing specialist has visited the program in the past two years. Date of visit _____

* The program is in compliance as defined above and within the past three years has not had any substantiated violations resulting in a Parental Notification and has not had any repeated substantiated violations of the same nature or exhibited a general pattern of regulatory non-compliance.

▢ For three points:

* A licensing specialist has visited the program in the past two years. Date of visit _____

* The program is in compliance as defined above and within the past five years has had no substantiated violations resulting in a Parental Notification and has not had any repeated substantiated violations of the same nature or exhibited a general pattern of regulatory non-compliance.

            *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *

I hereby give permission to the Standards and Monitoring Unit of the Child Development Division of the Department for Children and Families to release information about the above named program's regulatory status to the STARS administrative personnel.

_____   _____

STARS

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II. Qualifications and Training Arena

Program name _____

License or registration number _____

⊞ **For two points**
Qualifying programs are eligible for two points in this arena (no documentation needed)

⊞ **For three points:**

Verification that at least 50% of staff members

* have current (within 12 months from date of application) professional development plan with educational needs specified.

> ~ AND ~

* completed at least 36 hours of professional educational activities, above regulatory minimum, in the past 12 months. (list activities, further verification may be requested).

> ~ AND ~

* have completed at least 30 college credits or a BA, MA, PhD or comparable degree in a relevant field (see instructions).

> ~ AND ~

* have at least five years experience in an early childhood or afterschool setting.

Complete the table on the following page listing all qualifying staff members. Indicate the staff members that are being used to meet the standard with a mark in the leftmost column. These are the staff members for whom verifying information is submitted. No information is submitted for the other staff members. Each counted staff member must meet all 4 standards.

Staff information

List staff members and the information requested in the table below. Attach additional page if necessary. Include all full and part time staff members who are or could be left alone with children and have been on staff for at least 6 months.

Check if to be used in 50%	Name	Title or position	Age group (if applies)	Years in field[a]	Highest degree or credential earned[b]	Total # of professional development hours in past year[c]

a) verified by resume or work history
b) verified by copy of college transcripts or diploma
c) verified by list of professional development activities in past 12 months

For the staff members who are being counted in the 50% (that is, the left hand column is checked), this application must include
        1) professional development plan,
        2) list of professional development activities completed in the past year (Please do not send certificates or documentation of professional development activities – the list of activities including title, date, hours and presenter or sponsoring agency is sufficient),
        3) verification of educational level attained and
        4) work history (a resume may be submitted) for each.

STARS
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III. Families and Community Arena

Program name _____

License or registration number _____

▢ For one point:

Qualifying programs are eligible for one point in this arena (no documentation needed)

▢ For two points:

* Program is listed as a Specialized Child Care Services provider with the Child Development Division with the appropriate letter of agreement on file with the Division.
   Date of most recent Specialized Services training: _____
      (training can be advanced or basic, depending on the status of the program)

* List attendance dates and activities in community or family teams, show at least 24 hours during the past year. Use additional pages if necessary. See instructions for types of activities to include.   Section B requires additional descriptive information, see instructions for details.

Section A. Meetings. Be sure to list each meeting and specific dates of attendance. Do not use "ongoing", "every month" or other general indicators.

Date	Duration	Type of activity or meeting	At least 2 participants ("parent" or name of agency or program)		Name of attendee (s)

Section B. Other service activities. Check if using and see instructions for other information to be attached.

B1		Specialized services provided in program	8 hours
B2		Participate in community events	8 hours
B3		School aged children involved in community service	8 hours
B4		Host or organize support or recognition events	8 hours
B5		Participate in mentoring relationships	8 hours

▤ For three points:

* The information needed for two points (above) <u>and</u>

* Describe how you and your program play a leadership role in the early childhood and afterschool professional community.   Describe how these leadership activities impact the profession.

*Identify a professional colleague as a reference who can speak about the leadership role you and your program play.

Name _____   Title_____

Address_____

Phone number _____   email _____

* List leadership activities

In the space below, list leadership activities as described in the instructions.

Activities from list "A"

	Activity or role	Contact person or sponsor	Name of participant program member
A1. Once in past year			
A2. Role in 3 of past 5 years			

Activities from list "B"

	Activity or role	Contact person or sponsor	Name of participant program member
B1. Once in past year			
B2. Role in 3 of past 5 years			

Activities from list "C"

	Activity or role	Contact person or sponsor	Name of participant program member
C1. Once in past year			
C2. Role in 3 of past 5 years			

S T A R S

STep Ahead Recognition System

IV. Program Assessment Arena

Program name _____

License or registration number _____

☐ **For three points:**

* Indicate qualifying program standing

    This program is accredited by:

    ☐ National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
    ☐ National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)
    ☐ National Afterschool Association (NAA)
    ☐ National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)

    Date accreditation expires _____

<div align="center">OR</div>

    ☐ Head Start/Early Head Start program with Blue or Gold Certificate

    Date of last PRISM review _____

* Submit copy of certificate of accreditation showing award or expiration date or Head Start/Early Head Start Blue or Gold Certificate

* Submit most recent annual report (that was sent to the accrediting or qualifying body) or annual program improvement plan (if no annual report is required)

V(a). Administration for Registered Program Arena

Licensed programs use Arena V (b) (see following section).

Program name _____

License or registration number _____

▢ **For one point:**

Qualifying programs can elect one point in this arena (no documentation needed) if they do not want to submit the materials for the points below.

▢ **For two points:**

* Submit written policy statement, parent/provider agreement or parent handbook that details policies on closing due to provider vacation, illness, holiday or professional time and indicating that at least two types of provider closings are supported through parent fees.

* Indicate professional organizations where membership is held

organization(s)   name of member   date membership expires

_____

▢ **For three points:**

* The information needed for two points (above) <u>and</u>

* Parent handbook written explicitly for this program, including program philosophy and guidance philosophy

* Documentation of liability insurance

* Independently authorized operations budget

V(b). Administration for Licensed Program Arena

Registered programs use Arena V (a) (see previous section).

Program name _____

License or registration number _____

For one point:

Qualifying programs can elect one point in this arena (no documentation needed) if they do not want to submit the materials for the points below.

For two points:

* submit the most recent Accreditation Commission report (summarizing the finding of the validation visit and status of accreditation) or PRISM review report and cover letter.

* **IF** the report indicates that staff supervision or staff planning time are areas in need of improvement, the following must also be submitted:

    1. verification or description of the staff supervision system (that is, staff has regular opportunities (weekly to monthly meetings) for feedback and problem-solving with a supervisor or mentor).

    2. verification or description that staff are provided with planning time and are compensated for this (paid planning time). The planning time must be arranged, scheduled or somehow accounted for and must occur on a weekly basis.

    3. indication in the program improvement plan or annual report (submitted for Arena 4, Program Assessment) that the cited issues of supervision or planning time are being addressed.

For three points:

* Complete table on the next page and the wage worksheet showing calculations for adjusted wage level for all staff. Indicate the median adjusted wage (greater than or equal to $11.30 per hour). Instructions to complete the wage worksheet are on page 25.

Staff information for the wage standard

List staff members and the information requested in the table below. Attach additional page if necessary. Include all full and part time staff members who are or could be left alone with children and have been on staff for at least 6 months. Enter the information from the adjusted wages worksheet into the table below. Include the worksheet with your application if you are requesting three points.

Name	Title or position	hours worked weekly	hourly adjusted wage

Median adjusted wage (the hourly wage level where 50% of the qualifying staff members fall above and 50% fall below) = _____ per hour.

This figure must be greater than or equal to $11.30 per hour. This is 85% of Vermont's 2003 livable wage ($13.30) for a single person without employer paid health benefits.

Worksheet for determining median adjusted pay

Quarter of reference:____/____/____ (month/day/year) to ____/____/____ (month/day/year)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		for the most recent quarter (3 months)						
Name	hours worked per week	total wages	health care related payment	dependent care payment	cafeteria or flexible spending plan payment	total adjusted wages	weekly adjusted wages	hourly adjusted wages

How to complete the wage worksheet

Adjusted wages are calculated based on the program's employment pattern for the most recent 13-week (3 month) quarter. This quarter can correspond to divisions of the program's fiscal year or any period of 13 consecutive weeks as long as the closing date is not more than 30 days prior to the date of this application.

Column 1: List each eligible staff member's name. Eligible staff members are all those full and part time staff members who are or could be left alone with children and have been on staff for at least 6 months

Column 2: List the number of hours each staff member works per week. Include all time for which the staff member receives wages, that is, breaks, lunch, planning time, meetings, etc. for which the staff member is paid or which is included in salary. If a staff member works irregular hours each week, calculate an average weekly amount by finding the total hours worked in the 13 week quarter that is being used and dividing that number of total hours by 13 to get an average weekly number of hours worked.

Column 3: Indicate the total amount of gross wages earned for each staff member for the 13-week quarter, prior to any pre or post-tax deductions.

Column 4: Indicate the total amount of health care related payments available to the staff member for the 13 week quarter. If staff members are allotted a particular amount of health related payments per year, divide that by four to get a quarterly figure. These payments include health insurance premiums, dental insurance premiums, self-insurance payments or set-asides, health care payments or set-asides from a flexible spending plan or other health care related payments. Do not include money that is counted as wages in column 3.

Column 5: Indicate the total amount of dependent care payments available to the staff member for the 13 week quarter (or one fourth of the annual amount). Dependent care payments include child care and elder care. Include all child care or elder care expenses that the program reimburses the staff member for or pays directly on behalf of the staff member. Do not include money that is counted as wages in column 3 (e.g., dependent care deductions). If the program provides child care for staff members free of charge, do not list the tuition amount in this column unless "tuition free child care" is explicitly listed as part of the benefit plan for the staff member and the program's operating budget indicates this expense.

Column 6: If the program offers a "cafeteria plan" or similar flexible spending option as its benefit package, indicate the amount available to the staff person for the 13 week quarter (one fourth of the annual amount). If the flexible spending option includes health care payments or dependent care payments as part of the spending options, these do not have to be listed in column 4 or 5 if they are included here. Do not include money that is counted as wages in column 3.

Column 7: Calculate the total adjusted wage for each staff member by adding columns 3 through 6.

Column 8: Calculate the weekly adjusted wage by dividing the figure in column 7 by 13 weeks.

Column 9: Calculate the adjusted hourly wages by dividing the figure in column 8 by the average hours worked per week in column 2.

To determine the median adjusted wages, rank the numbers in column 9 from lowest to highest using all staff members. The adjusted wage amount where half of the staff members fall below and half of the staff members are above is the median. For example, if there are 13 staff members then the wages for the 7th staff member in the ranking will be the median. If there is an even number of staff members, then take the halfway point between the two middle numbers. Enter this median adjusted wage on page 23 of the application in the Administration for Licensed Program Arena.